

Health Care Summit Rapid Response #2:

-- Democrats' Disingenuous Claims of Obstructionism / Support for Republican Ideas --

Assertion #2 (11:39 a.m.):

Democrats will inevitably accuse Republicans of obstructionism today and implore both sides to come together on areas of agreement. Democrats' record on both Medical Liability Reform and Small Business Health Plans (AHPs) tells a different story...

Medical Liability Reform: On May 8, 2006, Senate Democrats voted unanimously against invoking cloture on Medical Liability Reform, despite the fact that the House had voted overwhelmingly to approve it on July 18, 2005, by a vote of 230-194. 14 House Democrats joined Republicans in backing Medical Liability Reform. Today, Democrats continue to block Medical Liability Reform. The president has called for inclusion of Medical Liability Reform in health care reform, yet real reform has not been included in either the House or Senate Democrat bills. The CBO has scored the Republican Medical Liability Reform proposal as saving \$41 billion, and increasing government revenues by \$13 billion. According to the CBO:

"Over the 2010–2019 period, those changes would reduce spending on mandatory programs by about \$41 billion and would increase revenues by \$13 billion as an indirect effect of reducing the costs of private health insurance plans (which would result in a shift of some workers' compensation from nontaxable health insurance benefits to taxable wages)."

Small Business Health Plans: On May 11, 2006, Senate Democrats voted 2-42 against invoking cloture on Small Business Health Plans (AHPs), despite the fact that the House voted overwhelmingly to approve AHPs on July 26, 2005, by a vote of 263-165. In fact, 36 House Democrats joined Republicans in backing AHPs. Today, President Obama talks about allowing small businesses to pool their purchasing power together. Yet, then-Senators Barack Obama and Joe Biden, were among the Senate Democrats who voted to block AHPs on May 11, 2006.